

# HAPPY HOVEL STORABLE FOODS

P.O. Box 781  
Yelm, WA 98597  
www.happyhovelfoods.com  
info@happyhovelfoods.com  
1-360-400-0902 10AM-4PM PST

## Food Storage Basics

### **I. Develop a Home Storage Mindset**

If you're new to food storage, first prepare by developing a food storage mindset. It's easy to think of lots of reasons why we can't get our food storage started; but we have to remind ourselves that ANY food item that is stored for later use (tomorrow, next week, next year, or years from now) is food storage. In that context, the canned vegetables and packages of pasta in your kitchen cupboard are part of your food storage.

#### **A. Keep Food Storage on Your Mind**

As you begin to focus on your home storage, keep your storage in mind as you shop, clip coupons, and browse newspapers for sales. When you find tomato sauce on sale, stock up on enough for a month or two. When canned vegetables are on sale, buy enough for a variety of canned goods in your storage. Pasta, oil, and beans keep well; so store enough for two or three months. As your pantry fills, you will begin to develop an idea of what you want to add to your storage, and you'll keep that in mind as you shop and plan your gardening.

#### **B. Plan Ahead When Buying in Bulk**

When you begin to buy in bulk, you will need to plan ahead to make sure that you have all the containers and equipment you will need for your storage. Reusable containers can be a blessing for those who plan to continue their storage as a way of life.

### **II. Start Simply**

Don't begin your food storage focus with the compulsion to obtain a year's supply of food storage immediately. Start your food storage plan by determining what food items you use regularly that could be bought ahead and stored for future use.

## **A. Back to Basics**

You may be able to save money with your food storage by using "back to basics" techniques such as grinding your own grains, sprouting seeds, growing garden vegetables, home canning, etc. Whole grains store well for many years and can be purchased inexpensively in bulk. If your family is not accustomed to eating whole-grain foods, you will need to increase the amount of whole-grains in your diet slowly to allow the body to adjust to the fiber increase. Whole dried herbs can also be purchased in bulk inexpensively. You can grind your herbs with a coffee grinder or mortar and pestle.

## **B. Food Storage is NOT Just for Emergencies**

Food storage is not something we set aside for an emergency, although it is a great blessing in such a time. Food storage is a plan for living better, buying less expensively, preserving foods we grow ourselves, developing a healthier lifestyle, and learning ways to use our storage for household uses and natural healing.

## **III. Store What You Will Use**

Examine the shelf life of food items your family uses. That will help you to estimate how much you can store. You can only store as much as your family will use before the shelf life of the food item runs out (stored at proper temperature and under proper circumstances in adequate food grade containers, without oxygen if appropriate.)

### **A. Make Use of Your Storage**

Make use of your food storage and find new uses for it. For example, learn how to use the same herbs as spices for cooking, formulas for healing, and household cleaning. Use salt, vinegar, and baking soda for cooking, healing, and household uses. Learn to grind whole grains and to sprout your grains for fresh sprouts, juices, essene bread, salads, and wheat grass. Proper use of your food storage can help to simplify your life, improve your health, extend your budget, and enlighten your soul.

### **B. Put Your Home Storage to the Test**

Once you feel confident that your home storage pantry is well-stocked, plan a weekend for your family to put your home storage to the test. Use only your storage to live on for the weekend. For a real emergency preparedness test, turn off the electricity and water, and survive using your alternate sources of heating, cooling, cooking, water, etc. Within the first hour you will think of many things you should have in storage that never occurred to you before. When you live on your food storage, you will become personally

aware of the need for a variety of herbs, butter powder, mayonnaise, and a number of things that will make your food storage tastier, more palatable, healthier, and more interesting.

#### **IV. Set a Goal, Devise a Plan, and Obtain Your Storage**

Set a goal, devise a plan, and obtain the storage you desire. For example, you might begin with a goal to obtain a month's supply of food storage. You might plan to purchase items such as staples, canned goods, dry milk, and pasta, making a chart of how much of each item you will need to store. As you make your grocery purchases over the next month, buy twice the amount you need of each item (one for this month's use, and another for next month's storage.) Buying on sale, using coupons, and growing your own foods can help to reduce the initial cost of storing foods. You might have to make some adjustments to find money for your storage by cutting back on fast food, eating a "cheap" meal once a week, or fasting for one day a month or more and saving the money you would have spent on food for your storage. You may examine your expenses and find other ways to trim your budget to allow for home storage; such as going out for entertainment one less time a month, giving your own haircuts instead of going to the salon, calling less long-distance, etc. After a few months of storing a month ahead and living off your storage, you will begin to see other ways in which you can obtain your food storage in greater bulk less expensively. You may devise a plan for a 3-month supply, a 6-month supply, a year's supply, etc. as your needs and means permit.

##### **A. Tailor Guides for Short-Term Basic Storage and Long-Term Extended Storage**

As you develop a home storage mindset, you can devise a plan for short-term basic storage and for long-term extended storage. Food storage guides are meant to be used as general guidelines that can be tailored to your family's needs that serve to give you a better overall picture of home storage. Food storage buying guides generally lay out a plan to obtain a year's supply of food storage with monthly or weekly goals; but these, too, should be tailored to your family's needs. For example, if everyone in your family is allergic to oats, a large supply of oats would be a waste for you. Substitute a similar food item that your family could put to use; such as barley, rice, or quinoa.

##### **B. Find Space for Your Storage**

As your storage grows, finding storage space can be a challenge. If you are lucky enough to have a root cellar, basement, or spare room with temperature control, you are very blessed. If space is a problem, get creative. Build shelves, store under beds, use an unused corner of a room, store under decorative tables, or store behind couches and other furniture. If you truly have a desire to set aside home storage, there will be a place for your storage.

### **C. Label Carefully**

As you package a food item for storage, be sure to label the container plainly with the name of the food item and date it is packed. Place your labels so that you will still be able to see them when containers are stacked or shelved.

### **D. Rotate, Rotate, ROTATE!**

The MOST IMPORTANT thing I can tell you about food storage is that it is necessary to ROTATE your storage. That means that you use the container that's been stored the longest and replace it with newer stored containers behind the older ones. If you are storing items that you never use, you are wasting space that could be used for food items you need. Food storage that spoils or lies untouched is garbage. Don't fill your home with garbage. Fill your home with precious healthy food storage that will be a blessing to you and your family on a regular basis and in times of need.

### **V. Storage is a Blessing**

As you become accustomed to using, rotating, and extending your home storage, you will find that it is a blessing to you and others in many ways. Your home storage is a blessing when your neighbor who has lost a paycheck is in need of groceries, when your loved one who has taken ill needs meals taken to his or her home, when you've run out of commercial cleaners so make your own, when a flood destroys all foods not stored in waterproof containers, when one of the ladies from Church asks if you wouldn't mind making homemade bread for something special, when your friend is in need of a poultice for an insect sting or wound, when power lines are down and refrigerated items spoil, when your father needs an herbal tea for headache or upset stomach, when a natural disaster destroys homes and food, when your child needs a homemade game to keep him occupied through an emergency situation, and, REGULARLY, every time you prepare a meal for yourself or your family using your home storage. Keep the faith, and always move forward prayerfully.

-Author Unknown-